

Saturday, 1 September

Acting

1. Resume of my telephone conversation with Secretary Gilpatric is attached.
2. Also attached are transcripts of my two telephone conversations with Carl Kaysen

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Conversation Between General Carter and Carl Kaysen on 1 September 1962

Mr. Kaysen: Pat, this is Carl Kaysen. You were calling me, but now I'm calling you, but it's your nickel.

General Carter: Well, I was calling you about a call I just had from Ros Gilpatric who is as much handicapped in their intelligence activities of analysis as we are over here, trying to get some of the information shaken loose so that at least we will be prepared to talk to the President on Tuesday.

Mr. Kaysen: Right, and he suggested to me, and I agree, that we go ahead and do the amount of processing we have to do, to do it on the minimal personnel basis possible, including making people work as long as they can and so on.

General Carter: Yes, well, of course within the Interpretation Center we are proceeding on the whole business and in fact have completed the readout, but we are keeping it there because the President called me yesterday at one o'clock and talked to me on the phone and he was so strong and so adamant that I jotted down, practically verbatim, a couple of sentences and I think I'd better read them to you --

Mr. Kaysen: I think you'd better read them to me and I think I should call him up --

General Carter: Well, as I took the notes, this is -- these are the two key sentences -- he said I would like to get this thing nailed right back into the box -- after discussing the problem of premature leak or release without the government knowing what they were going to do about it -- and I wrote this right down -- I would like to get this thing nailed right back into the box -- then he told me to call General Lemnitzer and tell him that he, the President, didn't want any discussion of this with anybody or any paper on it until next week when they're going to meet. Then he went on to say that otherwise it's going to leak out and we have trouble. And then he said that's why there shouldn't be any paper, shouldn't be any circulation in the intelligence community -- and he said it should not be made available to anybody such as the Secretary of Air Force, or SAC, or any of those things which are normally customary -- so, on that basis, while I am totally sympathetic with our difficulties, since I got it directly out of the old man's mouth, I think any of the three of us would be in deep trouble --

Mr. Kaysen: Well, Ros didn't get this as directly as you did -- the only thing to do is for me to call back and get some interpretation of this order. Now

let me try to be sure we can make some minimum sense out of what we want to do. The problem is how many people, in your judgment, without writing a paper, have to be involved in order to prepare for Tuesday's discussion? In your shop?

General Carter: Well, if we are going to merely inform the President of what we know --

Mr. Kaysen: Right, and what it means --

General Carter: Well, of what we know -- rather than, when you say of what it means, I think you are extending it a hell of a lot farther -- we could do that keeping it entirely within NPIC where it presently is, and we can do that to the President on Tuesday, and I don't have to know about it, and Mr. Gilpatric, nobody else has to know about it except the technicians --

Mr. Kaysen: So this would be just the NPIC technicians and a briefer --

General Carter: That's right, and they already there, they've already got the the information, they've made the read-outs, and we can give a floor show on Tuesday of what we have found out as a result of the latest take -- however, that's really a disservice to the policy people --

Mr. Kaysen: I agree, yes --

General Carter: who are going to get caught flat on Tuesday -- as a matter of fact, we have already shown to Uncle Bobby pictures and a quick run-out --

Mr. Kaysen: Right.

General Carter: And he's aware of that --

Mr. Kaysen: You've seen them yourself?

General Carter: Yes sir, I've seen them myself -- initially, initially -- we've got many more by now.

Mr. Kaysen: Sure. Has anybody else in the shop seen them, your people, outside of NPIC?

General Carter: Well, the Attorney General --

Mr. Kaysen: Yes, you mentioned him --

General Carter: And at least a dozen of my own people, sure -- but this, who's seen the picture and who hasn't doesn't have a bit of bearing on the problem in any way, shape, or form.

Mr. Kaysen: I couldn't agree more, but --

General Carter: What I would like to do would be to take the NPIC take, the initial analysis of what is there, and turn it over to the Department of Defense planners and our own planners who have to interpret, who have to write intelligence estimates, and as a matter of fact, in order to be properly organized for the Tuesday meeting, that Bundy is calling in preparation for the Thursday meeting, the guys have got to say, "OK so that's it, now what are you going to do about it ~~xxx~~ and how?"

Mr. Kaysen: Right, --

General Carter: So I personally -- the leaks do not come from the people who are doing the work, you know that as well as I do.

Mr. Kaysen: No, I know that, but you know we've got to deal with the people we've got to deal with. Let me ask you this, can we say, ~~xxx~~ couldn't you give me a number and say on a restricted basis so many people have to deal with it?

General Carter: Oh, I'll say thirty or forty, or something like that -- that would give me -- you see you've already got 900 people in NPIC, they don't all know about this -- oh, I think on that basis you could say probably a dozen.

Mr. Kaysen: A dozen?

General Carter: I would say that --

Mr. Kaysen: That's your people?

General Carter: No, I could keep it in my shop to half a dozen, --

Mr. Kaysen: Ros could keep it to half a dozen --

General Carter: Well, he wouldn't want to -- it would be a terrible inhibition on him -- you see the point is here --

Mr. Kaysen: Let me ask him for his figures --

General Carter: OK, but the problem here is that the fact that the stuff is there has already been publicized, ~~xxx~~ broadcast out of France, did I call your attention to that?

Mr. Kaysen: Yes you did, and I sent that up to the President --

General Carter: The word is around, all of Miami knows it, so what we're dealing with is a technical proof of what is generally known throughout the community. And we don't intend to make any releases on it --

Mr. Kaysen: Yes, I understand that --

General Carter: So if any response is required as to what our reaction might be, it could just as well be required from an AP query --

Mr. Kaysen: Yes, I agree. Well look, the problem is here, let me try to do something with it.

General Carter: OK. In the meantime, we're going ahead with it, you understand, in NPIC --

STAT Mr. Kaysen: Right. Let me take a minute to ask you a question, may I? This is on the other subject -- and all that. Salinger's proposed response to the questions arising out of this whole leak which we still don't know about --

General Carter: I thought that was yours --

Mr. Kaysen: Well, only the NASA spokesman was ours, but the original leak wasn't ours -- we don't know where the original leak came from.

General Carter: I see.

Mr. Kaysen: The NASA spokesman was ours -- we are proposing to get somebody from NASA who will be responding to _____ statement, you saw the statement quoted in The Post this morning? And he will say, you know, not only is it not true that you never had a failure, you had whatever the number is failures, you had one this year and two that year, whatever it is -- do you see any problem there?

General Carter: No, I don't see any problem on that.

Mr. Kaysen: Right, now we may then go to the question of whether we ought to get NORAD data fixed up and out through some scientific channel, and I know Ray Cline is working on this.

General Carter: No, as long as you don't give any disclosures as to how we know, just leave it up in the air --

Mr. Kaysen: No, and of course we're not going to say anything at all about more recent events --

General Carter: Well, I should hope not because --

Mr. Kaysen: I've made this very point with Salinger --

General Carter: Yes, but getting this stuff out now is real bad timing because we could look awful sick in another couple of hours --

Mr. Kaysen: Well, I have asked him also to hold off and suggested that we may have more information --

General Carter: OK, Carl --

Mr. Kaysen: OK, I'll go back to the President and see if we can get a --

General Carter: Just tell him on a very, very limited distribution in order that the planners can be prepared to brief him properly on Tuesday, and we'll keep it all in Washington -- something like that. OK?

Mr. Kaysen: OK.

General Carter: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Kaysen: Thank you.

Second Conversation Between General Carter and Carl Kaysen on 1 September 1962

Mr. Kaysen: Pat, I talked to the President and he said he sympathizes with your position and he perhaps stated his position a little too restrictively. What he wants to be sure is that you are personally in control of anybody who has this information and that he has it only for the purposes we discussed.

General Carter: OK. That's the same responsibility as DCI that I would have anyway except it makes it a little more personal.

Mr. Kaysen: Yes, I think the only point here, Pat, as I can speak perhaps from a little more personal observation than you have an opportunity to have, I think the President here didn't think, "I'm literally giving him an order," he thought more, "I'm expressing a certain general attitude and direction and I want Carter to know how strongly I feel about it."

General Carter: Yes, I see, well, I've been in the Army too long and when the old man says, "Scat," boy, I find a hole to scat to just as quick as hell, so I took him too literally, probably --

Mr. Kaysen: Well, I think it was very useful for you to raise the question and he was perfectly happy to have the point made.

General Carter: OK, fine, we'll keep it very, very close to our chests. Thank you very much. Bye, Carl.